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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: U.S. TORTURE OF DETAINEES

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage May 19 on Taiwan Minister of Health Yeh Ching-chuan's attendance at the World Health Assembly in Geneva Monday, which was Taiwan's first time participating in 38 years; on the conclusion of the DPP's 24-hour sit-in in front of the Presidential Office; and on reviews of President Ma Ying-jeou and his administration's performance one year after assuming office. Regarding editorials and commentaries, an op-ed in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" said that the torture of prisoners is a political as well as a moral mistake. However, United States President Barack Obama failed to provide justification when he decided not to release more photos showing prisoner abuse, the op-ed criticized. End summary.

"War, Torture, Morality and the Law"

Arthur I. Cyr, Clausen Distinguished Professor at Carthage College, opined in the conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] (5/19):

"... If clarity of commitment by Bush and Rumsfeld to torture was undeniable, though described with linguistic legerdemain, the Obama administration so far has been awkwardly ambivalent. After releasing classified details about Bush administration discussions, the White House has now backed off releasing graphic, gross photos of prisoners held in U.S. custody. Reportedly, CIA Director Leon Panetta and other officials have strenuously opposed the release of this classified information.

"Obama has yet to provide persuasive justification for his fitful footsteps. A brilliant presidential candidate, in this matter he has not demonstrated presidential leadership."

YOUNG